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PERS: Ailes, Stephen

OFFICE OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (PUBLIC AFFAIRS)

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ADDRESS BY
THE HONORABLE STEPHEN AILES
SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
AT THE ANNUAL GEORGE C. MARSHALL
MEMORIAL DINNER, AUSA,
SHERATON HALL, SHERATON-PARK HOTEL
WASHINGTON, D. C.
NOVEMBER 18, 1964

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THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
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General Gavin, General Bradley, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. I, of course, am greatly honored to be here in this capacity this evening.

I share with all of you great respect for General Marshall and deep admiration and affection for General Bradley. The careers of both men emphasize that the qualities which lead to a distinguished career in the Army are highly prized in civilian life. Both of these men distinguished themselves in post-Army careers -- General Marshall in the highest levels of government and General Bradley in business and in a whole range of activities for the public good.

Each is a legend in the Army. I feel that I know a great deal of both from the references to both which still pervade the conversations of the senior people in the Army.

The Army is a remarkable organization -- remarkable in ability and energy and in resourcefulness; but, most of all, in attitude. I am confident that I will never again be associated with so selfless or so patriotic a group of men, or with men who are so determined to advance the national welfare. I know that General Marshall and General Bradley espoused and indeed embodied this point of view, and that they contributed substantially to the traditions which make this attitude and approach so much a part of the Army today. I personally take great pride in being associated with the Army and in partaking of the inspiration that has come down through the years from the Marshalls and the Bradleys who have gone before.

The annual meeting of AUSA is an ideal time for the Secretary of the Army to make something in the nature of a report. This Association is his constituency in a sense in that it is made up of Army people and their civilian partners who support the Army. Furthermore, it effectively sees to it that the public generally knows something about the Army, about its inestimable value to the country, its accomplishments, and its progress. This particular occasion, the George Catlett Marshall dinner -- in my judgment by far the finest affair of its kind -- presents an ideal forum for a discussion, not only of great men and great deeds of the past, but of our hopes for the Army of the future.

A wide range of topics come promptly to mind when one contemplates what such a report should include. In the interest of time, I will limit myself to three or four items of current interest which I consider to be of long range importance to the Army.

The first item I would mention is a management development which I consider extremely significant, a new system to which General Abrams alluded in his remarks on Monday. We call it the "C" System because the ratings which we assign to the units of the Army under this system include the letter C. Under this system, we measure readiness of a unit in terms of three things -- one, manpower -- what percentage of the TO&E strength (that is, the standard strength for such a unit) is present for duty and what percentage of the required skills, the MOS's, are covered; two, equipment -- what percentage of the standard table of equipment is on hand and how much of it is in commission and ready for use; and three, training -- what level of training has been achieved by the unit. Every unit is assigned a readiness objective, measured in days required to get fully combat ready, represented by the symbol C1, C2, or C3, and based on that unit's mission under the war plans. The objective itself is translatable into required levels of manpower, equipment and training which the unit must meet. And the important point is that readiness objectives of all of the units in the Army, the manpower and equipment levels, can be met at the same time if the resources available to the Army are properly managed by the Army.

Regular reports come in showing unit readiness so determined, and the appropriate sections of the Army staff go promptly into action to remedy whatever deficiencies are revealed by these reports. These reports, when the kinks in this system are finally ironed out, will constitute not only an accurate and objective statement of the condition of our fighting Army, unit by unit, but will provide a constant up-to-date measure of how well we are managing the Army's resources. They will permit us to manage by exception in the sense that the source of every deficiency which appears can be identified, isolated, and promptly corrected.

Let me give an example. Recently C System reports from some units flagged the fact that too many of their wheeled vehicles were down for repair. The reason was not a shortage of repair parts or trained mechanics, but rather the fact that too many old vehicles were in the inventories of the units. This and some related studies on maintenance problems completed about the same time formed the basis for a substantial reprogramming of 1964 funds into the procurement of trucks and jeeps. The C System turned the light on a problem and we were able to take prompt steps required to remedy it.

In a sense, the top management of the Army has put on a hair shirt by the adoption of this system because, under this system, the red lights flash every time we fail to get to the units in the field the men they need with the MOS's they need, or the equipment they need or the means to maintain that equipment. The important thing to note is that the hair shirt is on the top management of the Army and not on the company commanders.

I have heard the comment made that this system tends to depreciate or dampen the traditional can-do attitude of the commander at each level because on occasion it requires him to report that his unit is not as ready as it is supposed to be. I cannot agree. We are dealing here with resource readiness, not attitudinal readiness and, in that sense, are measuring our performance, not his. I firmly believe that the Army's most valuable attribute is that can-do attitude, an attitude which has nearly two hundred years of tradition behind it, but I am determined that that can-do attitude is going to be backed up by all the men and all the equipment which the TO&E calls for. Let me point out that that is an unbeatable combination. Under the strong hand of our Vice Chief, General Abrams, and with all the support General Johnson and I can give it, this system will achieve that result.

The second item I would mention deals with the new recruit. We have made some major strides in improving our basic combat training, the eight weeks period of training which is every enlisted man's introduction to the Army. I have long been convinced that no program is more important to the Army than its recruit training program. This is the formative stage of a man's Army career in so far as his basic attitude and motivation are concerned. In the past, we have not done as good a job in this area as we should have. Two years ago, our Human Resources Research Office, HUMRRO, actually made a finding that the men of higher potential who came into the Army thought less of the Army at the end of basic training than they did when they came in.

Faced with this challenge, we have taken action. Within the past year or two, we have centralized recruit training responsibility at CONARC, have developed a new curriculum (through the combined efforts of our training center commanders under CONARC's guidance), have toughened up what one might call the soldier side of this program (the physical training, marches and bivouacs, hand-to-hand combat, etc.), and have raised the priority of the training centers so that they will get the trainers and the company commanders they need. We have taken a long series of steps to emphasize the importance of recruit training and to give to the trainer's job the prestige to which it is entitled. We have established the job of drill sergeant, called the time-honored campaign hat out of retirement to be the drill sergeant's badge of office, and have required even veteran noncoms to complete successfully a difficult five weeks course at the training center before they can qualify for this title and this assignment.

The results of these changes are heartening. I hope you talked to the drill sergeants at the exhibit downstairs. A preliminary analysis by HUMRRO indicates a strong possibility that the earlier finding will be reversed when all the evidence is in. The men in the new program, working with the drill sergeants, have a great deal of respect for the program, feel that they have gotten a lot out of it, and have ended up with a far more favorable attitude toward the Army and the NCO's and officers with whom they have trained than was the case before. Few developments could be of greater importance to the Army than this one.

One other aspect of the procurement of enlisted men should be mentioned. The Army has a program called Special Training and Enlistment Program or STEP for short. Under that program, we propose to provide a way for a volunteer to serve in the Army even though he cannot now meet our standards for enlistment, if his educational or physical deficiencies are readily remediable. In FY 1964, 181,000 men were examined for enlistment in the Army. Of these, 111,000 were acceptable. Of those turned away, 57,000 could not pass the mental test, but 41,000 of them had scores within the range that our experts consider to be correctable. This is no idle estimate since, as I am sure you know, the Army has had a great deal of experience under its General Educational Development program with correcting educational deficiencies of draftees who have come into the Army with test scores in this range. Of the 13,000 turned away for medical reasons, about 900 had correctable deficiencies. We propose to take in about 15,000 of these volunteers a year as on-trial enlistees, give them basic training over a stretched out period (14 weeks as against 8) at Fort Leonard Wood, and give the recruits with educational deficiencies a course of academic instruction each afternoon. We will take them into the Army if, and only if, after an appropriate period of instruction, they can meet our standards. If not, they will be honorably discharged. This program requires Congressional approval and will be presented to the Congress at an appropriate time when the new Congress convenes. Personally, I am thoroughly in favor of it as is the Army staff. Without lowering our standards in any way, by dint of a little extra effort on our part, we will make Army service available to well motivated men who would not otherwise be able to serve. And remember this, every time a man qualifies for regular duty in the Army under this program, one less man has to come in under the draft.

As far as officers are concerned, a most important step for the Army is the expansion at West Point which is now under way. Legislation enacted by Congress in the last fiscal year authorizes an increase in the enrollment at West Point from 2500 to 4400 men. This means that by 1972, West Point will be adding not 500 but approximately 900 second lieutenants to the United States Army each year, and I must say that I view the annual addition of 400 highly motivated and highly trained products of that admirable institution as one of the finest things which could possibly happen to the Army. Some \$20 million is included in the fiscal year 1965 budget as the first increment in construction costs for this expansion.

I called on General MacArthur out at Walter Reed Hospital the day after the President had signed the West Point Expansion Act into law last spring, and told General MacArthur about it. He was tremendously pleased. He said, "When I was Superintendent in 1920, the authorized enrollment was 1300. As Chief of Staff, I had it increased to 1960. The figure I really had in mind was 4400."

A second development of importance on the officer front is the new ROTC Program which was enacted by Congress in the close of this last session. Under this program, the Army will be able to offer to the ROTC colleges some flexibility which in turn will permit them to accommodate the ROTC Program on their campuses to their needs.

If a college wishes to continue the present four-year program of instruction with one summer camp between the junior and senior year, it may do so. If it wishes to change to a two-year program of instruction with two summer camps, it may do so. If the college wishes to maintain both programs, it may do so since the junior and senior years of instruction, MS-3 and MS-4, will be the same under both programs. The addition of the two-year program makes ROTC available to the ever increasing number of college men who receive their first two years of instruction in junior colleges. In addition, it does not make ROTC participation depend finally on a choice made in the first week of a man's college career when he hardly is in a position to make the best choice on such an issue. Further, this program may be better suited to the needs of the students on some college campuses or in some departments where the academic pressure is unusually severe.

One good aspect of this legislation is the fact that it provides the Army with funds for higher retainer pay to MS-3 and MS-4 students and for a sizable number of scholarships. We have not yet made final decisions on how the scholarship program will be implemented, but I can assure you that our principal aim will be to make these scholarships available to men who wish to make the Army their career.

I personally feel that the new ROTC legislation, for which Congressman Hebert of Louisiana worked so valiantly, will bolster the ROTC program and enable us to produce through it more and more officers of the kind we need. As I am sure you know, this program is our principal source of officers. Some 1,000 officers receive commissions in the Regular Army directly out of the ROTC program each year and, in addition, over 10,000 second lieutenants come on active duty for a two-year term each year. Up to one-third of these elect to make the Army their career.

From what I have said, you can see that we are taking steps to provide our units with the men and equipment which they need and the Army is visibly stronger every day as a result. But, while all this has been going on, we have not forgotten the taxpayer. The Army has played its part in Secretary McNamara's cost reduction program and has played it willingly and well. That program has three tenets: buying only what we need, buying at the lowest sound price, and operating what we have as efficiently as possible. This program has enabled the Army to do its job and to procure its equipment at less cost than would have been required had we not had the program. The higher costs which have been avoided amount to over \$1 billion in fiscal 64, and we anticipate a similar accomplishment this year.

We keep faith with the taxpayer in another and, in a sense, more painful way, and that is by closing installations which are no longer needed. Secretary McNamara announced this morning that a new list of installations to be closed will be issued tomorrow. Some Army installations will appear on that list. I would like to go firmly on record here that the Chief of Staff and I endorse and approve the inclusion of each of the Army items on the list, and are convinced that the actions to be taken will save substantial sums of money without in any way interfering with the Army's ability to perform its mission.

The purpose of all our efforts is to produce an Army which can function in the field. I am always impressed by the soldier in his primary role of soldier, and in his natural habitat, the field, and never return from a visit to the troops without being tremendously impressed with the men who make up the Army. Two weeks ago, I visited the Air Assault Division test now under way in the Carolinas and spent two days with the units of the 11th Air Assault Division and with the opposition, the 82d Airborne Division. I would like to say that the professional performance there by all ranks is plainly outstanding and tremendously impressive even to a lay observer such as myself. The resourcefulness and effectiveness of the 11th Air Assault Division and of the 10th Air Transport Brigade which supports it would exhilarate our friends and terrify our foes. I might say that these organizations have tremendously impressed the officers and men of the 82d Airborne Division by whom they have been opposed in these exercises. I talked with General York and several of his subordinate commanders and senior noncoms. Their attitude toward the Air Assault Division and indeed their pride in their own performance in the tests are both revealed in this paraphrase of what they told me, "Anybody but the 82d would have been badly cut up in this exercise."

Unit pride is an essential part of the strength of any Army, and we have our full share.

But in another area, in a far off corner of the globe, in a lonely war, some of our finest young men are writing one more heroic chapter in the epic of the United States Army. They are proving that we have in the Army today men whose valor, patriotism and idealism make them worthy heirs of the Marshalls and the Bradleys of earlier days.

I refer, of course, to Vietnam. Let me give you one particularly articulate expression of a viewpoint which I would say exemplifies the attitude of every man who has returned from Vietnam with whom I have talked.

Captain James Spruill was killed by a land mine in April of this year. His letters to his wife would have never been made public had it not been for the fact that she became dismayed at some material which appeared in the press last spring indicating that our servicemen in Vietnam were disillusioned. As she told me, in order to keep faith with the men there, she sent some excerpts of her husband's recent letters to the New York Herald Tribune. We were so impressed with Captain Spruill's eloquence that we published excerpts in booklet form for distribution in the Army. I would like to close by reading two excerpts from these letters.

"... It was brought to my attention last night that we were once inadequately equipped and poorly trained and that professional soldiers came from afar to aid the fledgling American Army in its fight for freedom and internal order. Two of these 'advisors' are well known -- Von Steuben and Lafayette. It is heartwarming to think that we now continue the tradition of sacrifice fostered by those two men when they aided a nation in need. . .

"... I feel that there is too much talk of despair. I warned you of that before I left. You may remember. Above all, this is a war of mind and spirit. And it is a war which can be won no matter what present circumstances are. For us to despair would be a great victory for the enemy. We must stand strong and unafraid and give heart to an embattled and confused people. This cannot be done if America loses heart. . . . Please don't let them back where you are sell me down the river with talk of despair and defeat. Talk instead of steadfastness, loyalty and of victory -- for we must and we can win here. There is no backing out of Vietnam, for it will follow us everywhere we go. We have drawn the line here and the America we all know and love best is not one to back away."

Ladies and gentlemen, the United States Army will live up to your highest expectations. It merits your support, and I know that it will continue to receive it.